

Wildland Fuels Committee
October 11, 2007
1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Granlibakken Conference Center
725 Granlibakken Road
Tahoe City, CA

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Jim Pena called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Members Present:

Patrick Wright, Jim Upton, Allen Biaggi, Bob Ashworth, Julie Motamedi,
Mike Brown, Amy Horne

Review and approval of minutes - Jim Pena: no minutes were available to review.

Review of Agenda - Jim Pena: the agenda was approved.

Appointment of three additional committee members - Jim Pena:
The homework for the committee was to bring bios for nominees after touching base to see if they are willing to serve on the committee. Jim Upton nominated Kathy Murphy, Dennis Crab and Norb Szszyrek, each passed as new members to the committee. Ms. Murphy and Mr. Szszyrek were in attendance and began their duties with the committee.

DIALOGUE –

Mr. Pena asked committee members to help form a set of priority topics to focus on. The committee decided on these five areas:

- Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy 10-year Plan
- Air Quality
- Stream Environment Zones
- Operational Constraints
- Fuels Uses and Disposal (biomass)

Mr. Pena - we will not make all the recommendations today. We will take and digest all documents received at this meeting.

List of documents received:

- WFC – 001 Comparing The Ignitability of Mulch Materials For A Firewise Landscape
- WFC – 002 Lake Tahoe Biomass Utilization
- WFC – 003 Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act Process
- WFC – 004 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy 10-year Plan

- WFC – 005 LTBMU Hazardous Fuels Treatments and Regulatory Permitting Processes
- WFC – 006 Map of Lake Tahoe SEZs
- WFC – 007 Project Planning and Implementation Process, CTC Forestry Program
- WFC – 008 Proposed CA-NV Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Work Plan
- WFC - 009 Solutions regarding Air Quality Issues and Fire Protection Efforts
- WFC – 010 Memorandum of Understanding on Policy Principles For Wood Biomass Utilization for Restoration and Fuel Treatments

Mr. Pena – Our dialogue needs to be on what needs to change and why for each topic.

- What do we want to see instead – an understanding of the future state?
- How will our proposal change or improve the situation?
- Can we get beyond the symptoms to the root problems?
- Do we need to pull together experts?
- Should be build committees to work in more detail and lead to recommendations?

This could take a couple of months to develop according to our schedule. We will discuss additional meetings and through what mediums – email or face to face meetings.

Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy 10-year Plan (WFC - 004) -

Terri Marceron provided a brief snapshot of what the strategy is all about. The plan is as of September 20th and is still a draft. It is not just a Forest Service plan; it is multi-jurisdiction including seventeen agencies. In order to get funding from SNPLMA under White Pine County Bill the Basin needed to produce the plan. This current plan integrates all plans of the cadre and meets the intent of the legislation and makes the funding available. On page 52 - the last paragraph it states the federal, state, and local land managers will meet annually to identify the scope, strategy and implementation plans. They will prioritize for funding consistent with the strategy.

Mr. Biaggi – it is getting more and more competitive for share of money since land sales are not what they were. We need good presentations and to do our homework.

Ms. Marceron – in Round 8 big SNPLMA– out of 9 categories – the total funds requested was \$301M, only \$82M was given.

Mr. Pena – somehow we need to better coordinate fuels work in the basin. This plan may be the avenue for improved coordination. Partners are already committed to working together and updating the plan annually.

Mr. White – our needs are being met with the annual meeting.

Mr. Wright – it is a good framework. The challenge is can it be implemented? Funding, burn days, and regulatory streamlining issues need to be tackled.

We need to ask the agencies involved to give us a briefing on constraints.

Then the Commission can make a recommendation. There ought to be a way to hear from the agencies involved on how the targets are able to be met.

Mr. Upton – if we get 80% of money, how would we decide what part of the project would funded?

Mr. Pena – need to hear from the agencies. Is this a realistic plan?

Fuels Reduction Process – Christy Daugherty – handout WFC -007:

Ms. Daughtery’s handout shows the process for the Conservancy to get a project on the ground.

Ideas discussed in the dialogue:

- Interagency permitting process
- Interagency planning process
- Problem with blending the color of money, liability
- Difficult to satisfy CEQA and NEPA with one document

Should we ask a group to come back with the feasibility? With the idea of implementing the strategy, seventeen agencies have projects; combine into one footprint in the same area, one decision document to cover that footprint.

Mr. Wright – should we ask partners to come back with an assessment for potential for a more integrated approach? The agencies are the experts, is there a lot of potential or not? Then this committee would then say ok we are going to push this through.

Ms. Marceron – Round 9 SNPLMA will open up for project proposals – the cadre could package a project or two for Round 9. Show first step of multi-agency packaging.

Ms. Murphy – I support this as a motion: I suggest endorsing the 10-year plan as a vehicle in the Basin to review annual adaptive management – all approved?

Mr. Wright – if we have a couple of projects for Round 9 – the agencies can tell us the best potential.

Mr. Upton seconds the motion. Passed.

Proposed CA-NV Tahoe Basin Fire Commission Work Plan – David Bischel:

Mr. Bischel pointed out that from the handout WFC – 008 - people have already been working on some of the long-standing problems this committee is discussing today. A lot of progress has been made. Rather than this committee taking on the problem, ask the working group to work for you and bring findings back. You can ask the working group to come to the meetings and report on one of your problems.

Mr. Pena – we would like the Permitting/ and Defensible Space/BMP Integration group to meet with us in November to make sure they are considering all the things we have talked about. **Action Item:** Harold Singer of Lahontan will take the request back to the committee. We would also like the Fuels Reduction working group come visit in November.

Mr. Pena - we need to hear from these committees, their finding/recommendation package. Look at any packages to massage and forward to the commission.

Air Quality –

Mr. Pena asked those present to inform the committee about current conditions around air quality and getting fuels treated in the basin. After the feedback, Mr. Pena asked the FS and NDF to submit recommendations from their experience on how to increase the number and effectiveness of burn days and report back at the next meeting. **Action item:** Air quality agencies (air alliance group) and burners will get together and submit recommendations to increase number and effectiveness of burn days. Ann Hobbs will contact the group.

REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS TO GO TO THE FULL COMMISSION TOMORROW – MR. PENA:

- 1) Use the 10-year plan as the framework to come up with a project/projects that propose treatments across counties, present to the committee and tie to Round 9 SNPLMA funding requests.
- 2) Accept Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy 10-year Plan as the mechanism that we use in the Basin as the agencies to get together for cross coordination (annual meeting)
- 3) Ask the air quality board to come back with recommendations on improving the effectiveness of burn days and increasing the number.

Motion is adopted, seconded, no one opposed to give these recommendations to the commission tomorrow

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Garry Bowen – I have a problem with terminology of Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy 10-year Plan. It should be more about being a united front. The public at large would be more appreciative of that. This morning was a good example of the united front – the Forest Service and Lahontan worked together on a SEZ. Really good start, innovative equipment.
- Allen Biaggi – want to thank Lahontan and Forest Service for tour this morning.

DRAFT AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NOVEMBER 8 MEETING

- Dialogue on three areas missed this time – Stream Environment Zones, Operational constraints and Fuels uses and disposal (biomass)
- Schedule time for working groups (½ hour each)
- Discuss findings from groups asked to report

Email Jim Pena if you have something to add to the agenda. Allen Biaggi will be the next meeting manager.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pena adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:55 pm.